

**Ferris State University
Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application**

I. Identification

Name of Primary Applicant: Dr. Mischelle Stone, Alliance of Faculty Employees

Members of Team: Dr. Mischelle Stone, Criminal Justice
Dr. Michael Berghoef, Social Work
Michelle Richardson, M.A., Alliance of Ferris Employees
Brittany Leslie, Cramer Hall Director

Department or Unit: COEHS/School of Criminal Justice

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II. Event Title

This event is titled "Out and About: Examining Gay Life in Small Town America."

III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address. (See the University Strategic Plan and the Diversity Plan)

This event addresses a number of diversity-related goals. Among these goals are:

- Advocating for diversity and inclusion;
- Introducing diversity into the culture of the University;
- Provide expertise and leadership on diversity and inclusion related matters, for example, the challenges facing LGBT students in rural areas, and the impact of intolerance;
- Infusing diversity issues into the broader discussion of discrimination and prejudice
- Promoting the benefits of pluralism and diversity, both locally and globally, and
- Preparing our students to be active, productive citizens in a diverse society.

IV. Abstract (150-200 word, use additional paper if necessary). If the application is approved the abstract will be posted on the Diversity and Inclusion Office website.

The event entitled "Out and About: Examining Gay Life in Small Town America" is a three-part film series that examines small-town life for members of the LGBT population. Each of the films chronicles the real life experiences of individuals living in small towns in America. Though different in their make-up and focus, each of the films

fits within the overarching theme of the challenges that members of the LGBT face in coming to terms with their own sexual nature and the rejection of friends, families, and community members. Further, it examines the ways in which members of the LGBT community deal with this rejection.

V. Event Narrative (up to 4 pages single-spaced)

The goal of this film series is to bring together the members of the gay, bisexual, transgender, and straight communities to enhance the dialog about challenges facing members of the LGBT community in small towns across America. Each of the films is based on real life experiences of members of LGBT communities. The first film, *Prayers for Bobby*, chronicles the life of Bobby Griffith, a young man who commits suicide due to the religious intolerance of his mother and other community members and his mother's subsequent activism to reject this intolerance. This film is especially well-timed in light of the recent suicides of several young people across the country. This film is co-sponsored by the Counseling department, and a member of the department will co-facilitate a talk-back session with a member of the social work faculty following the film.

The second film is entitled *Out In The Silence*. This documentary chronicles the real-life story of a small American town confronting a firestorm of controversy ignited by a same-sex wedding announcement in the local newspaper. It is presented as a way to challenge members of the FSU community to examine their values and help close the gaps in understanding that serve to divide our community. This film will also have a talk-back session that will be co-facilitated by Michelle Richardson and Jes Berndt, M.Ed. The third film, *Small Town Gay Bar*, is a documentary that shows how LGBT persons in rural Mississippi create a sense of family and community by driving hundreds of miles each weekend to participate in events at a gay bar operated by two lesbians. In addition to addressing LGBT stereotypes, this film also confronts the stereotypes so frequently attached to southern, rural communities. The talk-back session that will accompany this film will be facilitated by Dr. Mischelle Stone.

a. The conceptual framework that explains how the event will augment Ferris's long-term commitment to diversity and inclusion.

FSU students, faculty, and other employees all participate in day-to-day life at Ferris that provides many opportunities for engaging with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Despite many opportunities for doing so, many people continue to operate within their own "comfort zones." This film series brings people of diverse backgrounds and ideologies together in a safe and mutually respectful environment with an overarching goal of gaining greater understanding of the challenges facing LGBT members as they live and work in small town America. In doing so, it is the intent of the series to reinforce that FSU is an environment for student learning that is inclusive of and sensitive to a diverse student population.

Consistent with the FSU's goal of advocating for diversity and inclusion, these films and the accompanying discussion introduce diversity into the broader culture of the University and provide expertise and leadership on diversity and inclusion related issues. They not only address issues of intolerance and discrimination facing members of the LGBT community, they also address these issues in relation to the rural and southern cultures.

b. The goals and intended outcome(s) of the event include:

- Advocating for diversity and inclusion;
- Introducing diversity into the culture of the University;
- Provide expertise and leadership on diversity and inclusion related matters, for example, the challenges facing LGBT students in rural areas, and the impact of intolerance;
- Infusing diversity issues into the broader discussion of discrimination and prejudice

c. A statement on how the event relates to the curriculum or a specific discipline, if appropriate.

This film series is clearly interdisciplinary in its benefit; however, it has particular import for students in criminal justice. As police are often the "gatekeepers" of the criminal justice system, it is imperative that they have a comprehensive understanding of and appreciation for, the diversity of the population with whom they will interact. This understanding is especially significant because the interaction that police have with the LGBT community can either serve to protect them from the victimization they so often experience, or it can serve to re-victimize them. A lack of understanding of, and sensitivity to, the issues concerning the LGBT community can result in disparate treatment at best, and further victimization at worst. For CJ professionals in the fields of probation and parole and victim advocacy, an awareness of, and appreciation for, our differences can result in a greater understanding of "just" responses to LGBT victimization.

d. The film series timeline

December 1, 2010: Announce to faculty so they can build it into syllabi, assignments, or extra credit.

January 12, 2011: Heavy promotion via flyers and FSU Torch and University-Wide notices, continuing until the main event.

January 25, 2011: Film and Talk Back #1: Prayers for Bobby. Pizza and Pop beginning at 6:00 PM, followed by Main Event (in IRC 120) at 7:00

PM. Administer assessment instrument following the film/talk-back session.

February 20, 2011: Jess Bernard arrives in town.

February 21, 2011: Jess Bernard provides diversity training for DSAGA, housing, and/or faculty

February 22, 2011: Film and Talk Back #2: Out In The Silence. Pizza and Pop beginning at 6:00 PM, followed by Main Event (in IRC 120) at 7:00 PM. Administer assessment instrument following the film/talk-back session.

March 29, 2011: Film and Talk Back #3: Small Town Gay Bar. Pizza and Pop beginning at 6:00 PM, followed by Main Event (in IRC 120) at 7:00 PM. Administer assessment instrument following the film/talk-back session.

e. Description of the target audience, including the estimated number of participants.

This event is open to all individuals, and varying perspectives are encouraged. We anticipate that approximately 600 people will attend.

f. The expected impact that the event will have on Ferris.

It is anticipated that this event will provide a safe and welcoming environment for lively dialog about challenges that LBGT members in small town communities face in their efforts to acknowledge their sexual nature and live productive lives. The events are intended to infuse diversity issues into the broader discussion of discrimination and prejudice with a goal of preparing our students to be active, productive citizens in a diverse society.

g. A specific plan to assess the impact of the event on the University.

This impact of this event will be assessed through evaluations that will be handed out to participants near the conclusion of the event. The evaluations will ask students to rate their level of awareness of issues before and after their viewing of the films. The surveys will use a Likert-type scale that will not only assess levels of awareness, but other issues related to the goals of the project as described above.

VI. Budget

a. Anticipated expenses (see below):

- b. Funds anticipated from other sources (see below).
- c. Total amount requested from Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant (see below).

VII. Final Report

A final report is required and it will appear on the Diversity Office's website. That report is due no later than three months after the funded activity. The final report should address:

- a: A self-evaluation**
- b: Results of the event assessment**
- c: Attendance figures**
- d: Final budget**

A final report will be delivered by June 1, 2011.

Applicants' Signatures:

Mr Stone
Michelle Richardson
[Signature]
[Signature]

Submission Date: 11/11/10

Submit applications to Patty Terry, Diversity and Inclusion Office, CSS 312. Review of applications will begin upon receipt and continue contingent on available funds.

Budget Overview

	Requested Grant Funds	Funding from other sources	TOTAL BUDGET
STIPEND			
HONORARIA (Jes Berndt)	\$100	\$150 (COEHS Dean)	\$ 250
TRAVEL/HOTEL/MEALS (800 Mi)	\$400/\$180/\$74		\$ 654
FOOD (Pizza and Pop)	\$1,600		\$1,600
RENTALS (Movies)	\$ 200	\$100 (Counseling)	\$ 300
PRINTING & DUPLICATING	\$ 50		\$ 50
PROMOTION			
SUPPLIES & POSTAGE			
RESOURCE MATERIALS			
ASSESSMENT TOOLS	\$25 (Pens/Paper)		\$25
OTHER			
TOTAL	\$2,629	\$250	\$2,879